

LONG-TERM AIR TRANSPORTATION STUDY (LATS)

Washington State Aviation Planning Council

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why do we need public investment in Washington's aviation system?

It is in the public interest of the citizens of Washington State that we maintain a healthy aviation system. Airports play a vital role in the state's economy by facilitating jobs and commerce. According to an economic impact report from 2001, Washington's airport system annually generates 7,600 jobs, \$140 million in wages, and \$490 million in total sales output. In addition, airports play a key role in providing a link to the national transportation system for both travelers and trade activities. In spite of its importance to the state economy, inadequate planning, limited resources, a fluctuating economy, and local land use conflict threaten the long-term health of many of the airports within Washington's aviation system.

Why do we need an airport system?

Aviation is important part of Washington State's transportation system and to the economic health and quality of life of Washington citizens, businesses, and visitors. The primary purpose of the aviation system planning process is an examination of aviation system dynamics together with statewide, regional, and local objectives to ensure that air transportation will continue to be a viable transportation alternative. The study recommendations and findings will be integrated into the Washington Transportation Plan (WTP), the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS), and regional and local transportation plans. The study will also assist in aligning federal, state, and regional objectives and priorities and help clarify airport sponsor objectives.

How is LATS funded?

The study is primarily funded through FAA grants, with partial funding through the state's multimodal resources.

What does LATS cover?

A typical state system plan covers several components that evaluate public use airports and include:

1. Inventory of the current airport system
2. Identification of air transportation needs
3. Forecast of system demand
4. Consideration of alternative airport systems
5. Definition of airport roles and policy strategies
6. Recommendation of system changes, funding strategies, and airport development

7. Preparation of an implementation plan for system improvements
8. Exploration of issues that impact aviation within the study area
9. Special studies that may include high-speed rail, air cargo, and commercial airport analyses

How is the LATS structured?

LATS encompasses three phases:

- Phase I (*completed in September 2006*): Assessed the existing facilities and capacity at the state's airports.
- Phase II (*completed in July 2007*): Included long-range activity forecasts for each airport, market analyses of the commercial airports, a high-speed rail evaluation, air cargo study, and future airport capacity assessment.
- Phase III (*present*): Involves the formation of the Washington State Aviation Planning Council to review the fact finding in Phases I and II and determine long-term airport development priorities to guide investment decisions as well as shape statewide policy.

Three Phase Approach to LATS

Phase I: What do we have?	Phase II: What do we need?	Phase III: How will we get there?	LATS is being developed in three phases. Each phase answers one of the three basic questions fundamental to the development of a systemwide approach to managing Washington's aviation resources.
Performed a statewide airport facilities and capacity assessment, including an analysis of current utilization.	Developed 25-year market forecasts of each airport in Washington State, including forecast of aircraft operations, passengers, and air cargo. In addition, the role of high-speed passenger rail was assessed for its ability to relieve future constraints in aviation system capacity	The Washington State Aviation Planning Council will consider the LATS Phases I and II findings as well as public input. This data and information will be used to shape future aviation policy and recommend how best to meet the state's long-term commercial and general aviation airport needs consistent with ESSB 5121.	
<i>Completed September 2006</i>	<i>Completed July 2007</i>	<i>To be completed July 2009</i>	

When will LATS be completed?

WSDOT has submitted the technical work of Phases I and II to the newly created Washington State Aviation Planning Council, which is scheduled to submit recommendations to the legislature, governor, transportation commission, and regional transportation planning organizations by July 1, 2009.

What issues does the market analysis address?

The market analysis addresses:

- The future airport needs, based on passenger and air cargo operations, future airline plans, an assessment of both national and regional aviation trends, as well as demographic, geographic, and market factors that may affect future air travel demand.
- The capacity of the state's commercial airports.
- The role of the state, regional planning organizations, FAA, and airport sponsors in addressing statewide airport facility and capacity needs.
- The identified options for any airports that will reach capacity before the year 2030.

What is the purpose of the 10-member, governor-appointed aviation planning council?

The Washington State Aviation Planning Council will use the technical work from Phases I and II to make recommendations that shape future airport policy for the state and determine how best to meet airport capacity needs.

Who is on the aviation planning council?

The Washington State Aviation Planning Council consists of appointees from varying geographical areas and with diverse backgrounds. In accordance with ESSB 5121, members of the Council are to consist of the following:

- Member of the Transportation Commission (serves as Council Chair)
- WSDOT Aviation Director
- Director of the Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development
- Two members of the general public (one from western Washington and one from eastern Washington)
- FAA technical expert
- Commercial airport operator
- Member of the Growth Management Hearings Board
- Washington Airport Management Association representative
- Airline representative

Will the public be involved in making recommendations?

Public involvement and outreach has been a high priority throughout the LATS process, and will continue during the work of the Washington State Aviation Planning Council (LATS Phase III). WSDOT is leading public outreach during Phase III consistent with the communications plan that was developed in Phase I and updated in Phase II. The communication plan is available, along with other further information about LATS and the Council, on the WSDOT Aviation Web site at www.wsdot.wa.gov/aviation. Public outreach will include an active public information program, public workshops, meetings with stakeholder groups, and survey research.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON LATS, CONTACT NISHA MARVEL,
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